THE FIRST THIRTY YEARS

—An Editorial

THE

Commonweal

What Is The Commonweal?

by The Editors

Berlin: Schizoid City

by Max Fischer

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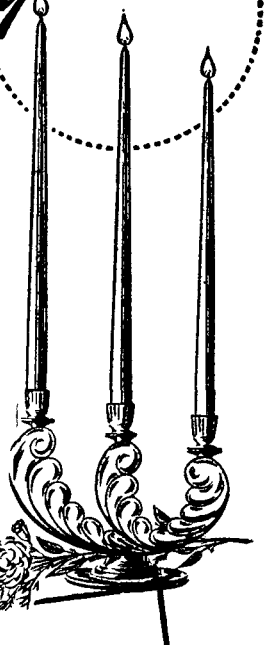

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THE
Commonweal
week by week

The First Thirty Years

THE American journal of opinion almost by definition is a magazine of limited circulation. Yet its uses are manifold. It has not only proved handy for students who, overnight, have to get up something on a current political problem that baffles leaders in Washington; on occasion it supplies current comment for professors, writers for mass media, and political figures who in their own fashion give its viewpoint wider currency. Meanwhile it depends on a loyal body of subscribers who are intent on the state of public opinion and interested in ideas, as well as the development of the arts, in this country. Such has been the case with The Commonweal, as it has with such periodicals as the *Nation* and the *New Republic* down through the years.

During the great debates of recent decades the circulation figures for this type of journal have registered some rather wide gyrations. But the arc of this pendulum is shorter now. Most of the weekly reviews, among which The Commonweal has won a recognized place, have circulations somewhat above thirty thousand. This round figure is the objective The Commonweal has set for itself during 1954, its Thirtieth Anniversary Year. Is not such an objective eminently worthwhile?

For from its first issue in November, 1924, the purpose of The Commonweal has been to set forth and disseminate a point of view. Its field is secular affairs; its primary concern the pressing problems of men and society and the ideas that go into the making and solution of such problems. Because of its Christian inspiration, The Commonweal has a special contribution to make. That is the primary reason for the interest in its point-of-view; that often explains why it is quoted. Now it seeks to gain a wider hearing, at long last to attain the same general circulation bracket as the other American weekly journals of opinion.

That the objective for the Thirtieth Anniversary campaign is a practicable one is demonstrated by some current figures. Commonweal circulation has been rising substantially during the past three years. The present print order of twenty-two thousand copies each week represents an increase of fifty per cent since 1951. With forward momentum such as this and a sustained high renewal rate, even among new readers, there is a solid base from which to inaugurate the anniversary campaign. The magazine has more readers and is more widely quoted today than ever before in its history. The required goal of eight thousand new long-term subscriptions by January 1 does not appear to be out of reach, if Commonweal readers think well of the plan to win new readers.

In order to reduce it to practical, tangible terms we are, in the next few weeks, sending current subscribers a letter with three forms for new subscriptions. From time to time special campaign coupons like the one on page 458 will provide another convenient means of enlisting new readers. The anniversary drive for new subscriptions is to be a sustained one. The Commonweal will publish reports of progress during all stages of the campaign, beginning with the February 26 issue. We urge all readers to take part.

For those who do not have someone in mind whom they would induce to subscribe or designate for a gift subscription, we will designate public libraries or other important centers of information where the magazine would be welcome. One way or another there is an opportunity for every interested reader to play his part in extending the influence of the magazine.

We appeal to our readers, then, during this Thirtieth Anniversary Year to join with us in this campaign to enable The Commonweal to play its full role as an American journal of opinion. With their response to this challenge, and their sustained interest, The Commonweal cannot help but attain the goal of eight thousand new subscribers during 1954.

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"LET TEN MILLION DIE"

IN his State of the Union address, President Eisenhower wisely declared that the United States intends to follow an "impartial" policy in the Middle East. The present tensions in that part of the world are second only to those besetting East and West in the Cold War. Neither side is faultless, and the U.S. can best serve its own interests and the cause of world peace by identifying itself not as a partisan but as a peace-maker in the area. Recent actions on both sides of the Arab-Israeli truce line do not seem to have been directed toward creating a climate where peace-making is possible.

The Israeli raid on the little Jordan village of Kibya late last year was properly condemned by the United Nations as a wanton act of "cold-blooded murder." Then early in the new year, the new King of Saudi Arabia announced in Hitler-like words that Israel was a cancer on the Arab world and had to be destroyed, even if ten million of the fifty million Arabs must die to bring this about. The King's words were savage, brutal and unquestionably inflammatory. In the present atmosphere in the Middle East they were wholly unforgivable. They should certainly be taken into account by our State Department, which only a week earlier had named Saudi Arabia as one of the countries it planned to arm against Soviet aggression. Can a man who talks with such violence be trusted with arms? The King's utterance should also be clearly branded as a warlike gesture by the United Nations. Nor does it seem too much to expect it to be publicly repudiated by the responsible leaders of the Arab countries.

To find excuses for this outburst of the Saudi Arabian monarch is as reprehensible as explaining away the deaths of the helpless Kibyans who died at the hands of rampaging Israeli armed forces. The world, speaking through the United Nations, has accepted Israel as a fact in the political organization of mankind. War chants coming from Saudi Arabia or any other Arab country will only alienate the world against all Arab nations. The sooner the Arabs find more rational spokesmen than the bellicose son of Ibn Saud, the better for the Arabs' own future—and for the peace of the world.

NEXT WEEK

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN analyzes the political unrest in Italy:

"The most recent government crisis and the outcome of the last elections are but small waves on the surface compared with the underlying crisis of conscience which is occurring within the Christian Democratic Party. Things are happening among the people in that party and among the people who used to vote for it which only a few years ago would have been undreamt of: some Catholics consider these things very disquieting indeed; other Catholics hail the beginning of a new era. Three bare and simple facts determined the outbreak of the crisis and made it inevitable. . . ."

POW TRIALS

THE arrest of Corporal Edward S. Dickenson on charges of having curried favor with his Communist jailers in Korea "to the detriment" of his fellow-prisoners, and the formation of a court of inquiry to investigate the case of Marine Corps Colonel Frank H. Schwable, who under torture falsely confessed waging germ warfare, has produced an undignified quarrel between Defense and Army Departments.

The Defense Department claims that the Army's action against Dickenson undercut psychological strategy for the last-minute wooing of the twenty-one American prisoners then residing by themselves in the middle of the Korean neutral zone.

On the face of it, this argument strikes us as profoundly distasteful. The implication is that the POW's should be induced to return, and *then* told of possible court-martial. The principle involved here should be justice, not psychological warfare. If any of these men committed actual crimes against their fellows, they should be tried. Let them come back, if they are to come back, knowing what they are up against.

We do not think that either Corporal Dickenson or Colonel Schwable should suffer imprisonment for sheer weakness or for capitulating under torture. But if Dickenson committed actual crime (the charge is as yet unspecified), then it is only right that he stand trial, as it is only right that the court be tolerant of weakness and youth. And if the Marine Corps feels that in order to preserve the tradition of the military officer's absolute fidelity it must act against Schwable, then let it do so. But let the Defense Department not speak softly at the same time it raises the big stick.

NO BUNDLES FOR CONGRESS

THE editors of this magazine have on several occasions expressed their conviction that Congressmen are grossly underpaid. It seems to us that

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anyone who seriously considers the question is almost certain to come to the same conclusions; the wide gap between the financial rewards paid to men in industry and the professions and those received by our national legislators is too obvious to miss.

Recently a similar conclusion was reached once more by the commission established by Congress to consider the problem. The group's recommendations include doubling Congressional salaries and substantially raising the income of Federal judges. There is really nothing surprising about these findings; the only surprise would have been if such recommendations had not been made.

So far, all that has prevented Congress from repairing the inequities in its present pay scale has been fear of public opinion. A few years ago, for instance, a proposal for a Congressional pay raise produced the "Bundles for Congress" movement, which encouraged citizens to send old clothes, worn-out shoes and similar items to their Congressmen as a sarcastic comment on the pending measure. In the face of such pressure, Congressmen rather understandably lost their nerve.

Now that the matter is up once again, we hope that no comparable campaign directed against Congress will take shape. But if the foes of raises for Congress insist on using such tactics, we hope Congress will not surrender to them. The nation has a right to expect the best of the men sent to Washington, and those elected have the right to a salary more in keeping with the demands made upon them and with the responsibilities they bear.

HARDY MYTH

BY and large, President Eisenhower's recent Taft-Hartley suggestions did not add up to really substantial changes in the law in either direction. But we note with considerable regret his suggestion for government-sponsored votes in all strikes. One immediate effect of such a provision would be to plunge the government even deeper into the field of labor-management relations, and this, it seems to us, is not at all the effect to be desired.

Real as such objections to this idea are, however, our major objections are somewhat different. These derive from the fact that the proposal is at once the expression of and further encouragement for a highly unrealistic attitude. The proposal is based on a myth, the origin of which can probably be traced to a deep-seated conviction that when it comes to strikes union leaders are much more "radical" than their followers, ready to order their unwilling followers out on the picket line at the drop of a hat.

In actual fact, the truth in this matter is almost exactly the opposite; responsible union leaders often have a hard time trying to keep their members from downing tools for insufficient reasons. That this is the case has been demonstrated time and time again. The wartime Smith-Connally act, for instance, originally provided for government-sponsored strike elections. But contrary to the expectations of many businessmen and lawmakers, when such elections were held the rank-and-file workers who voted to go out on strike far outnumbered those opposed.

As a result, eventually it was decided that the whole idea of government-sponsored elections was a waste of time and money, and the provision was eliminated. But apparently the idea has a fatal fascination, for now it has popped up again in a new form. As things stand now, our objections to the proposal are rather theoretical, since the chances for any action on Taft-Hartley this session seem slim. But it is sad to see that someone—reputedly Commerce Secretary Weeks—was able to persuade the President to go for this old chestnut again.

DANGEROUS CHEERS

PRESIDENT Eisenhower's recommendation that Congress pass a law to provide that anyone convicted of conspiracy under the Smith Act shall forfeit his citizenship was the only part of his State of the Union address which drew loud cheers from the assembled legislators. Future historians will perhaps mark down this fact as a revealing footnote on the American temper in 1954—and also on the prevailing mood of the Eighty-third Congress. For this proposal was the only piece of unrestrained, unashamed demagoguery in an otherwise largely constructive, enlightened speech.

The Congressmen's initial enthusiasm was, of course, quickly followed by some sobering second thoughts. Serious doubts that such action is Constitutionally possible were heard. Senator Pat McCarran—a man not noted for his leftist tendencies—called the whole idea "half-baked." And so it may never come much closer to actual realization than "unleashing" Chiang Kai-shek—the most loudly applauded point in the President's first State of the Union address.

For what would the President, and the Congressional cheerers, really have us do? Shall we, as has been facetiously suggested, buy a fleet of space ships in which to float the native-born traitors far out from earth's boundaries? Shall we erase their names from off our birth records and pretend they never were? Senator McCarran's "half-baked" seems to be the right word.

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THE MOVIE ISSUE

THE controversy over "freedom of the screen" has moved fast during the past few weeks. And as its pace has been accelerated the confusion attending it has been compounded.

Three things have happened: Mr. Samuel Goldwyn has suggested that the Hollywood Production Code be revised to bring it "reasonably up to date"; Mr. Howard Hughes has exhibited his film "The French Line" in St. Louis in defiance of both the Breen office and the Legion of Decency; and, finally, the United States Supreme Court has overruled the New York and Ohio State censorship boards' bans on two films, "La Ronde" and "M."

It is easy to see a pattern in these three things. On the one hand there are Mr. Samuel Goldwyn, Mr. Howard Hughes, and now the nine Justices of the nation's highest Court banded together with the "Liberals" in a conspiracy to subvert all standards of movie decency and flood our theatres with a stream of filth disguised as "freedom." On the other hand, there are the Legion of Decency, the local censorship boards, the Catholic Bishops, and all other "right-thinking" people, joined together in their determination to stop the flood of obscenity which threatens us.

This is the lineup, at least as it emerges in large sections of the Catholic press. It is reversed in large sections of the secular press to make different heroes and different villains. Messrs. Goldwyn and Hughes, aided by the Justices of the United States Supreme Court, are here seen as warriors of enlightenment in league against the forces of thought control. Thus, depending on which press you read, you are summoned to battle—either with the Righteous against the Libertines or with the Liberals against Reaction.

This is unfortunate. Distinctions are troublesome things but they must be made if values—both moral and civic—are to be rescued from the present shouting. The pattern is not as simple as partisans on either side would make it.

For example, to favor a revision of the Hollywood Production Code does not necessarily mean that one favors "license" on the screen; to applaud the action of Archbishop Ritter against exhibition of the Hughes film in St. Louis does not necessarily mean that one foreswears one's belief in civil liberties; to approve the Supreme Court's guarantee of "freedom of the screen" does not necessarily mean that one denies the State's right to protect its citizens against what is obviously pornographic.

Difficult and complex issues are involved here. That they should be widely confused is alarming. What is needed, desperately, is a readiness to take thought by both sides. And this should be done before more names are called and more values are endangered by the friends of either "decency" or "freedom."

THE LION

IN a recent issue of *Life* was published the picture of a lion—a lion with a look on his face of Atlas-like, intolerable, unending boredom. This lion makes his home in a knotty-pine paneled room off the living room of the house of an Illinois family. His den is separated from the rest of the house by bars, but he has in it a flower-patterned easy chair where his visitors may sit, and just through the bars is the family television set which, it is reported, the lion enjoys watching. When the lion, whose name is Tex, is left alone, he roars. So the family keeps him company, and leaves the television on for him to watch when they are away. The twenty-eight year old daughter of the household sleeps in the living room so that Tex will not be lonely, and she and her parents frequently visit him, and run the vacuum cleaner over him, which soothes him.

But in recent weeks, Tex has languished. He has been off his feed, ill. Veterinarians don't seem to be able to help. His disconsolate expression, photographed in *Life,* gives him a startling resemblance to Bert Lahr. One almost looks in the background of the picture for the Scarecrow and Tin Woodman. The pretty daughter of the family is pictured, but, sadly, she is not Judy Garland. There is just Tex, looking like Bert Lahr, switching his tail back and forth, pacing his knotty-pine room, occasionally having the vacuum cleaner run over him.

What is in his uncombed head? For three years he has been a housebroken pet, fed seven pounds of meat and two quarts of milk a day, watching the television set. Is something else pacing in his skull? Racial memories? It is hard to turn past that page in *Life.* One thinks of other pacers; of the man who one night does not come home; of the man in New Jersey who paced the street one day three years ago and killed a dozen people; of the bus-driver who left his loaded bus on the street and went to Florida; of the man who thoughtfully stepped out of his office window; of the man who simply decided not to catch the train he was supposed to catch. The marble clicking back and forth; the dripping faucet; the ashtray on a ship's table sliding to starboard then to port, a glass Sisyphus. Who has stayed up to savor the night? Who has done the perverse thing? Who has said no? Who has had a vacuum cleaner run over him to soothe him? Who but Tex, resigned, incessantly pacing lion in a knotty-pine room, pacing, bored, but pacing.

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What Is The Commonweal?

SOME NOTES TOWARD A DEFINITION OF THIS MAGAZINE AND ITS ROLE IN THE CATHOLIC PRESS

FROM time to time the editors of The Commonweal receive letters asking about the magazine. A certain number of standard inquiries appear in the morning mail with some regularity. For instance, "Is The Commonweal a Catholic magazine?"—put as a challenge—is almost sure to show up after the magazine has taken a position on some highly debated public matter like the Truman-MacArthur debate. There is a popular misconception in the United States that on such matters Catholic opinion is practically unanimous. When The Commonweal and the Jesuit weekly *America,* for example, supported the President in the MacArthur-Truman clash, it was deemed significant enough to be sent out over the airways as a news item.

Again, we are forever running into people who find it a matter of wonder that The Commonweal has taken such a strong stand on the McCarthy question. For a certain number of Catholics, wholehearted admirers of the Senator, our opposition has been embarrassing and somewhat infuriating. In some cases they are rather inclined to question not only The Commonweal's political wisdom but its editors' religious orthodoxy. An anti-McCarthy Catholic to such people is a clear contradiction in terms. The Church is anti-Communist; Senator McCarthy is anti-Communist; therefore anyone who is anti-McCarthy is pro-Communist and anti-Catholic: this dubious syllogism seems to form the basis of their thinking on the question.

Other readers are delighted to find that The Commonweal echoes their own feeling about the McCarthy "crusade" and, in their efforts to counteract the widespread sympathy for Senator McCarthy in American Catholic circles, tend to exaggerate the significance of The Commonweal as a Catholic publication. It seems, in the light of all this, important to state just what standing The Commonweal does have as a Catholic publication.

During the thirty years of its life, The Commonweal has been generally accepted as a Catholic publication, though there is nothing in the masthead to indicate that the magazine is an organ of the Church or of any official body of the Church. As a wholly independent lay weekly which is primarily concerned with the temporal order—the specific province of the layman—The Commonweal clearly cannot claim to speak for the Church. Its editors have not been commissioned by the Church; they certainly cannot speak with the spiritual authority of the Church, nor indeed even with the Church's temporal experience. As editors we have often gone out of our way to make this clear in the pages of the magazine. If Senator McCarthy read The Commonweal with any regularity he would not have charged us, as he did in the letter published in the issue of November 27, 1953, with "falsely and dishonestly masquerading under the title of being a mouthpiece for the Catholic Church."

The Commonweal is a magazine put out by a small group of journalists who are Catholics. The magazine is no more officially Catholic than that. Its editors have no more standing in the Church than any other laymen. Any authority we might have derives not from ecclesiastical status but from whatever merits we have as journalists who are specifically concerned with the meeting of the spiritual and temporal realms.

The fact, however, that we *are* Catholics and tend to see the temporal order as being directly related to the spiritual surely distinguishes this magazine from similar journals of opinion. The fact that most readers of The Commonweal are Catholics who take a lively interest in the Church and seriously try to conform their thinking on temporal questions to their spiritual commitments also means something. Finally, most of the magazine's contributors are Catholics—some of them quite eminent Catholics and personally invested with authority which The Commonweal as such does not have. They write in these pages because they know that here they can quite consciously speak as Catholics. This also is not without meaning.

IT is true that The Commonweal has a comparatively large number of non-Catholic readers. Such readers turn to the magazine because they are interested, for one reason or another, in the magazine's point of view. These readers, too, know that in The Commonweal they find *a* Catholic outlook on questions of the day. The same is true of The Commonweal's many excellent non-

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Catholic contributors. We conceive of the Catholic spirit as one which welcomes good thinking, good writing and good reporting wherever they are to be found. We do not believe that all wisdom—on every conceivable subject—is confined to the Catholic body or that Catholics should deprive themselves of the knowledge, insights, human understanding and plain good sense that are found outside the Church. For that reason we have always welcomed the generous support given by the many outstanding non-Catholic writers and journalists who have written for this magazine through the years. The Commonweal has been operated according to the principle that things are not good or true or beautiful because they are Catholic but are Catholic because they are good or true or beautiful. In the area of life where, by the very nature of things, there cannot be merely one Catholic position—where practical political and social prudence are the highest criteria—we have not hesitated to endorse what we have regarded as the better part, whether we found it within the Church or outside.

As long as The Commonweal continues to concern itself mainly with the thorny social and political problems of the day—dealing in concrete realities and not only in abstract principles—a large number of Catholics will continue to take strong issue with the magazine. This is as it should be. Anyone publishing a journal of opinion, Catholic or not, must count on the fact that the world is full of people with opinions of their own.

In a word, it seems to us that our critics do have a point when they challenge whether The Commonweal actually is a "Catholic" magazine, but the designation is not without meaning. Clearly, we are not publishing a religious magazine in the usual sense; certainly we have no ecclesiastical status. Still, there is something "Catholic" about The Commonweal which distinguishes it from other private journalistic ventures and it seems natural enough that it is generally thought of as a "Catholic" publication. Whether or not the magazine has a full claim to the title—which, in any case, it does not use—its readers think of The Commonweal as "Catholic."

Often the difficulty is gotten around by distinguishing between the "official" and the "unofficial" Catholic press. The "official" press would include the diocesan papers and by extension the clerical-edited journals as well as those put out by religious orders. The "official" nature of these papers, though, is somewhat ambiguous, too. Certainly the diocesan publication is "official" to the extent that it is used by the Bishop to communicate with his people. But in the areas where the Church does not take an "official" position—again the McCarthy issue and the Truman-MacArthur debate serve as convenient examples—can any editor, "official" or not, commit the Church to his personal opinion? It would seem that there is nothing more "official" in Patrick Scanlan's or Father Gillis' heaping praise on McCarthy than there is in The Commonweal's dire warnings of the dangers of McCarthyism. Both represent *a* Catholic opinion about Senator McCarthy's influence; neither represents *the* Catholic opinion—for the simple reason that there is no such thing.

THE Commonweal's general approach, as contrasted with that of certain other Catholic journals, has been described as "liberal"—that woolliest of all woolly words. As a "liberal" magazine, The Commonweal quite naturally arouses the opposition of Catholics with an "un-liberal" (or "illiberal") outlook. But it should be remembered that these Catholics too have a point of view—an outlook which arouses the opposition of the Catholics who share The Commonweal's general approach as much as ours bothers them. If The Commonweal were to adopt their point of view, its violent critics then would be its present defenders. As long as the nation is loosely divided between people of a "liberal" temper and those of a "conservative" temper, it seems perfectly natural that Catholics too should be so divided. If there were no Commonweal to give expression to the "liberal" element among American Catholics, a "liberal" magazine would have to be founded. It has been predicted—and not without reason—that if the present Commonweal were to fail today, almost as a sure thing a similar magazine would be on the planning boards in the morning.

Periodically in the Catholic press there is a little flurry of controversy about the "liberal Catholic." The phrase, alas, is an unfortunate one that has caused no end of misunderstanding. It suggests that, on the one hand, there is the plain old-fashioned Catholic—as one writer modestly described himself—and on the other a dubious member of the Church whose theology is shaky, whose loyalties are questionable and whose ecclesiastical standing is scandalously uncertain. This, at best, is a distorted view of the healthy division between Catholics.

The recurrent "liberal Catholic" argument is usually carried on in a fog of semantics. Many decades ago a full-blown political philosophy called Liberalism was solemnly condemned by the Holy Father. Now it is not unheard of for some Catholics to brand their co-religionist opponents' arguments as "liberal" and then triumphantly produce this papal condemnation of Liberalism in an attempt to silence those who disagree with them. It is like describing a religious community's approach as "American" and then exhuming the papal condemnation of "Americanism," that phantom heresy, to prove that the community is not all it should be. (The valiant Paulist Fathers once suffered from this kind of an attack.) Paul Blanshard did a similar thing

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when he cited the condemnation of "Americanism" and left the impression that the Pope had solemnly anathematized our democratic way of life.

The Commonweal does not describe itself as "liberal," though the designation does not upset us. Certain social and political values in American life—concern for the underdog, interracial justice and the placing of human rights above property rights, for instance—have long been described as "liberal." We endorse these values under any name. Nowadays—in the era of Senator McCarthy—the "liberal" emphasis is on civil rights and the protection of our traditional democratic processes. The Commonweal has long fought for these values, too. It is a matter of indifference to us whether the fight is called "liberalism," called "conservatism" (which in this case may be more accurate) or called something else. The values remain stable and worth fighting for, whatever they are called.

Happily, the word "liberal" is still used in the old-fashioned sense, not so much to describe the concrete positions one takes as to designate one's spirit and method of approach. The use of reason in controversy rather than belligerence, the absence of the chip-on-the-shoulder, the unwillingness to use the truth as if it were one's private possession, the rejection of the sectarian spirit and willingness to deal with others not as if the truth they have were of a different kind from ours or their errors were inevitably born of malevolence —this general approach is often described, in a catch-all word, as "liberal." The approach actually represents The Commonweal's ideal. Unhappily, the editors and writers for this magazine do not always reach that ideal; but when we don't, we betray our own standards and, we think, the standards set for any Catholic journalist.

Father Gerald Vann, writing in The Commonweal three years ago, summed up the ideal of the Catholic journalist which we have taken as our own: "It is not enough to have the truth oneself," Father Vann wrote, "in the sense of knowing the Church's teaching about the Trinity, the Incarnation and so on; truth is a question also of *mode,* of the mode of approach to other facts, other beliefs, other problems; it implies clarity but it also implies sympathy; it implies critical judgment but it also implies charity, for God who is truth is also love. The French speak of the *vulgarisation* of theology: and the word means popularizing, it does not mean vulgarizing. Good writing is part of truth. If you take a true proposition and state it in a sentimental way, in a sectarian way, in a vulgar way, you damage the truth of it. You damage the truth itself because you distort it; you also sin against the truth inasmuch as you tend to distort or degrade the minds of your readers." In the same article Father Vann wrote: "A Catholic historian who whitewashes the evil deeds of Catholics sins against the truth."

IN any discussion of The Commonweal it is important to underscore the fact that it is published and edited by laymen. We are fortunate enough to have among our contributors a number of outstanding clerical writers and critics. These bishops, priests and Religious are among the best writers we have. But it should be remembered that the direction, policy and general responsibility for the magazine are entirely in the hands of its lay staff. (For the benefit of our non-Catholic readers we might add that we have never been interfered with in any way by ecclesiastical superiors. We have, of course, been roundly criticized from time to time by individual priests who could not see eye to eye with us—which, given the controversial nature of the magazine, is understandable enough—but we have always been left entirely free by the proper Church authorities to size up situations as we saw them and to turn our editorial guns even on Catholic targets when, wrongly or rightly, we felt it was the thing to do. We have never been asked by anyone to submit to censorship of any kind.)

As a lay publication, The Commonweal does not pretend to be the "voice of the Catholic laity" or any such thing as that. In the first place, the Catholic laity has not appointed any group to be its voice. Secondly, there simply is no one voice of the Catholic laity. The late Rabbi Wise used to say that the only thing two Jews could agree upon was what a third Jew should give to charity. All Catholics, by definition, agree on the fundamentals of their religion and on those questions which come under the heading of faith and morals. But on other matters Catholic opinions vary as much as Jewish opinions—as regular readers of this magazine know well.

The fact that The Commonweal reflects the views of some Catholic laymen should not be overextended. Nevertheless the magazine, as a "Catholic" periodical, does have a certain character which derives from the fact that it is lay-edited. As is fitting for a lay publication, our primary interest is in the "world," the temporal order. We do not conceive of our roles in priestly or near-priestly terms. We do not think it is our special vocation to lay down the moral law for others or to indulge in overt preaching, for instance. This is not to say that we think social, political and artistic matters can be divorced from morality or that it is proper for a group of Catholic editors to put out a magazine which does not give expression to the Christian spirit. But, in terms of the Christian vocation, it is our feeling that The Commonweal should serve more as a "witness" than as an apostle.

If there is one thing which distinguishes Catholicism from other religions it is that the Catholic ideal is catholic. There is in Catholicism no denial of value, however "secular" its uses. All truth—even the least "religious" in the usual sense—comes from God.

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Values are cherished not only because they form part of the brilliant mosaic which the Catholic view of the universe shapes into unity: they are respected for themselves, too.

The Commonweal has long felt that it is an innocent betrayal of the Catholic spirit to despise literary or artistic values, for instance, or to subordinate them —in effect to destroy them—in order to serve some sectarian end or end which might be called "religious," in the institutional sense. For that reason the magazine tends to put stress on the artistic merits of books, plays and movies. In general, we believe, moral classification belongs to the province of the professional moralist. Obviously, one cannot deal with creative efforts in a moral vacuum, no more than one can truly treat of their moral aspects in an artistic vacuum. There are, however, questions of emphasis. In the "official" Catholic press, stress is properly placed upon the moral aspects. The particular forte of this branch of the press—really an extension of the pulpit—is moral judgment. Because readers turn to the papers of their dioceses for moral judgment, as they should, the emphasis is placed on moral evaluation. A magazine like The Commonweal cannot presume to take over the priestly function. In this magazine the moral considerations are dealt with in the *total* consideration of the work.

As a lay publication, The Commonweal, as has been said, cannot speak for the Church or for the Catholic laity. By the same token, the magazine is comparatively free to express its own views without danger of committing the Catholic Church, even in the popular mind. No one, of course, can engage the Church where the Church refuses to be engaged. But in the case of the "official" Catholic press, there is always the danger that the errors, stupidities and prejudices, as well as the wisdom, of individual editors will be attributed to the Church itself. For that reason the responsible editor of such a publication is slow to commit his paper to any purely temporal or partisan political cause, regardless of what opinion he personally may hold. The Commonweal has no such restrictions. The magazine can approve or disapprove, praise or denounce as it sees fit without involving the Church or the Catholics of America. When, for instance, we endorsed Adlai Stevenson in the 1952 campaign, we committed no one but ourselves. Our endorsement was worth only whatever prestige the word of The Commonweal could bring it by virtue of the magazine's reputation and journalistic record.

WE have been asked from time to time to spell out The Commonweal's political philosophy. It is not an easy thing to do, because the magazine does not commit itself to any ism, party-line or partisan loyalty. In 1952 The Commonweal endorsed the Democratic candidate. In 1956, the magazine might endorse the Republican candidate, the Democratic candidate or no candidate at all. If it can be said that The Commonweal operates according to any political dogma, it is the right to take a fresh look at things periodically, to make all judgments tentative and to consider the total political situation, expecting the inevitable moral ambiguities, and then make a pragmatic judgment which does no violence to basic moral principles, though often enough the judgment—as long as politics remains in the sinful hands of men and not angels—will be not ideal but merely the lesser of two evils. Someone has said that politics consists in making a constant series of lesser-evil choices. Certainly we have ample and depressing evidence right in the Catholic press that if one waits for the "ideal" and demands simon-pure conditions before taking any political step, he will be paralyzed into inaction, or, as happens even more frequently, he will join the angry Utopians, the perennial critics who in their own fashion fiddle sadly while Rome burns.

As Catholics, the editors of The Commonweal look for guidance to the social and political principles which are to be found in the papal encyclicals. The present Holy Father has laid down a body of wise principles which are meant to guide the individual Catholic in his thinking about the problem of war and peace. The problem of finding peace, of course, is very much the concern of the Church. In general, the Holy Father's directives are "internationalist," constructive and eminently practical. He has urged world cooperation, united action against aggression, the sharing of wealth and technical know-how between the have and have-not nations, and unity between all persons of good will against the materialistic dangers that threaten the civilized world. Obviously, these are general principles and not specific directions. How to apply these principles with wisdom and political prudence is a subject upon which Catholics will properly disagree. But it has been our contention that the principles are not meant to be wrapped up in pretty words and then put aside. Some applications are obvious.

It is difficult, for instance, to see how any Catholic can consistently oppose the UN and every possible manifestation of the international spirit and still pay lip-service to the recent papal directives. We do not wait on a sinless world or a wholly reformed world before setting about the business of reforming it. We do not see how we can do that and still accept the name "Catholic" as a designation for The Commonweal, even in the limited sense that The Commonweal is a "Catholic" magazine. The area of proper disagreement between Catholics is wide indeed, but we feel that the Catholic publicist simply cannot leave the papal peace program in a pious rhetorical vacuum.

THE EDITORS.

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Schizoid City In a Divided World

MAX FISCHER

DURING the early days of the First World War I had a terrible dream. I saw Berlin, the grand city in which I was then living, in a nightmarish vision of destruction: many blocks of houses in ruins bearing the black scars of fire, and everywhere people in despair. I told this dream to some friends but they warned me against spreading such nonsensical defeatism; such a catastrophe could never happen to "Mighty Germany."

When our American plane crossed high over the Soviet Zone and banked towards the Occidental island of Berlin, it seemed that my dreadful dream recurred for a second time. There were awful gaps in the panorama of the former Reich capital: old landmarks had disappeared, while the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, a frightful Victorian pretension, had become romantically embellished by destruction, like the castle ruin of Heidelberg.

In spite of a storm I had felt at ease on my plane but seeing the ruins of Berlin gave me a feeling of nausea. Strangely enough, the Germans themselves who have now been living for eight years among these ruins are no longer impressed by the work of destruction, nor do they like talking about it. If the newcomer speaks about the annihilation of historic beauty, they hasten to talk at length about their great efforts at reconstruction. One accepts it as a symptom of energy and optimism.

Berlin, formerly a very orderly city, is now architecturally even more irregular than an American city. Uncollected debris still stands side by side with new, elegant, one-story shops. Modern skyscrapers are surrounded by old slum houses and even tents.

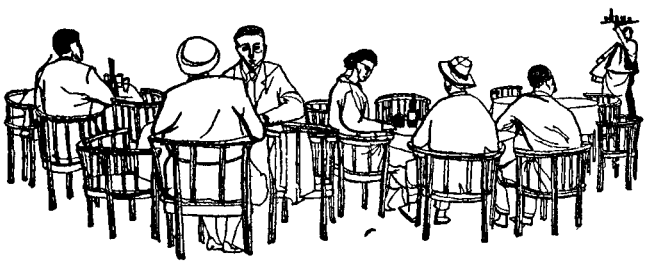
Some parts of the city were saved from the destruction, but they are perhaps the most ghostly ones. I found restaurants which not only offered their old specialties but where there were the same old waiters with the mannerisms of the past, seeming almost like puppets. There was a famous man of letters who used to promenade in a red waistcoat and he still sports the same style although his waistline has shrunk by two-thirds. In a cabaret, an elegant ventriloquist, a shadow of his former self, still tells exactly the same jokes he told two decades ago.

Mr. Fischer, a former German editor, teaches at the New School in New York.

IN this jumble of revolutionary change and stubborn conservatism it is hard to gain a stable viewpoint. One meets old friends with whom one begins a conversation as if the discussion had been interrupted only a half hour ago; but again others are so drastically changed that one is tempted to doubt their identity. Thus in looking for the new features of Berlin, one is always haunted by stubbornly surviving reminders of the past, which do not seem to fit into the present.

The deepest change, of course, is that Berlin, formerly a strongly unified city with characteristics and a dialect of her own, is now, in fact, two cities: the Communist city in the East and the Occidental city in the West. It is—besides Vienna—perhaps the only place now where you can go from one of the "two worlds" into which our globe is divided to the other without undergoing political formalities.

One walks just from the well-lit restaurants and shop window displays on the western side of a border street to the eastern sidewalk and one is suddenly surrounded by an atmosphere of poverty, darkness and fear.



If the man from the eastern side enters the shops on the western sidewalk, his *Ost-Marks* are usually accepted at the regular rate. A kind grocer will even be inclined to give him more food than he pays for, as in the minds of West Berliners, people living east of the Iron Curtain are poor devils stricken by misfortune.

The "Orientals" often make excursions into the nourishing West though they risk punishment, or the confiscation of their purchases by the East Zone police. The Westerners, on the other hand, very seldom undertake a trip to the "Orient" where there are few things to be had other than cheap prostitutes.

But there is no Berliner in either the eastern or the western sector who is not convinced that this division of his city is unjust, senseless and impractical; that it increases the expenses of city administration and frustrates the solution of many urgent, solvable, problems. Though people have no very clear ideas how reunion may be achieved, no one is inclined to believe that this sawing up of a modern metropolis can remain permanent. They all dream of "the day" that will bring better times. It is now almost five years that the western two-thirds of the city and the eastern one-third have had two different mayors, two different parliaments, two different universities, two different kinds of books, two types of newspapers.

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Berlin was once a crossroads not only of Germany but of Continental Europe. Today it is an isolated city. West Berlin is surrounded on all sides by Soviet occupied areas. Rail and auto traffic from the Federal Republic to West Berlin has been restored but it passes through rigorous Communist controls. Those who wish to avoid this nuisance have to come and go by American, British or French planes. The fugitives from the Soviet Zone of Germany who find it relatively easy to escape into West Berlin have to be flown out to the Federal Republic in order to protect them from arrest by the Communist highway and rail control officials. The motor traffic of West Berlin is less heavy than that of many smaller cities because the cars to be seen these days on the streets of West Berlin are practically all local cars.

If we take this into consideration, the great activity of Western Berlin life is amazing: the initiative of her industry, the quality merchandise in the shop windows,

the astonishing intellectual life. It seems to this writer that no city in the world has so many book-stores of high standard as has present-day West Berlin. The musical life and the theaters are also full of activity and, strangest of all, in spite of the economic difficulties, theaters are filled to the last seat. First-nighters are not as elegant as in the old times but they are by no means shabby.

The coffeehouses on the *Kurfürstendamm* are again overcrowded, not with people hastily taking a snack but passionately discussing politics and problems while lingering over a single cup of coffee or a bottle of Coca-Cola—by far the most popular import from the U.S.A. The intimidated inhabitants of the eastern zone who have to speak softly are especially envious of the Western freedom of mind.

WHILE roaming through Western Germany, I was often aware that the young generation inclined to a flight away from politics. They told me that the Weimar Republic had given illusions to the people, that Hitler had deluded them on an even larger scale, and that they had a suspicion that they were also being cheated by the present government. Thus, they concluded that since they were unable to understand the background of politics, it was best to abstain from any political activity.

It is characteristic that one does not find such a mentality in the former capital of the Reich. Here I did not encounter one thoughtful man, not a single student, who was not avidly interested in the actualities of politics. To these people, questions of government are burning problems into which they are being pushed by the experiences of daily life. This trend has survived Mayor Reuter, and should make it morally impossible for the Western Allies ever to abandon the Berliners.

In Berlin, and almost only in Berlin, did I meet young men ready to give their lives to spread their ideas among the people living under Soviet terror. West Berlin is not only an endangered island amidst Soviet Germany but, at the same time, the strongest defense against the further expansion of Communism. It is evident that the results of the last election for the *Bundestag*, the great majority Adenauer won for his policy, the annihilation of the extremist parties, have eased the situation for the West Berliners. Although to date they are not allowed to participate in German elections and to act as a fully integrated part of the German Federal Republic, they are indeed the most patriotic among the Germans, fully aware that Berlin will again be the capital of a reunited Germany.

The fear that the Russian colossus might some day devour isolated West Berlin is now a nightmare of the past. In spite of all the economic difficulties, there is no inclination towards gloomy speculation. The isolation of West Berlin is in itself a setback to its business life, but one seldom hears complaints that West Berlin is in any more difficult situation than other cities of the Federal Republic.

Nevertheless the isolation of West Berlin is not an easy problem. Before the war an average of two million tourists came to Berlin; West Berlin now has only six hundred thousand visitors per year. Rail traffic has dwindled. While in 1938, one hundred eighty-two express trains and more than one hundred fifty regular trains per day left Berlin, there are today only one hundred and seven regular trains.

Most government offices have left the city. Berlin was the capital of both the Reich and its greatest state, Prussia. Neither exist today. Banks and many other organizations have left. Of course, the foreign diplomats are gone. The glamor and much of the commercial activity of the capital have disappeared, but not its vitality or its spirit.

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THE SCREEN

REAL LIVE PEOPLE

IF the trend toward biographical pictures continues its 1953 pace, the movies will polish off the great and near-great in no time and have to start on the near-near-great. Biographically speaking, "The Glenn Miller Story" seems pretty unlikely as movie material; but Producer Aaron Rosenberg and Director Anthony Mann, helped by scriptwriters Valentine Davies and Oscar Brodney and a good cast, have handled this material so well, with a minimum juggling of facts, that the results are quite satisfactory.

Although the film opens somewhat slowly, this typical success story about a boy with vision who insisted that a band should have individuality picks up with a bang in a Harlem jam session scene on the Millers' wedding night. Louis Armstrong, Gene Krupa (themselves), and several other of the boys give out with a lively version of "Basin Street Blues" in this effective scene, skillfully photographed in Technicolor. James Stewart plays Glenn Miller extremely well, and as he ages through the advancing years, he looks remarkably like the famous band leader. June Allyson doesn't age with the years, but she turns in a charming performance as the devoted wife who encourages her husband through the less prosperous periods, proves a thoughtful helpmate when success rides high, and a brave widow at the fateful Christmas broadcast of 1944.

The music in "The Glenn Miller Story" is especially well done. Because of the new stereophonic sound techniques, Miller's original recordings could not be used; but they were carefully duplicated, and his hits like "Moonlight Serenade," "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "Pennsylvania 6-5000" and others come through fine in the Miller style.

AUDIENCES who like their facts dished up with realism, no matter how painful, might pay attention to "The Wild One"—a picture that is factual in that John Paxton's provocative script is based on a story by Frank Rooney which in turn is based on an actual incident that happened in California. It displays a group of hoodlums, motorcyclists who ride around the country with a contempt for the law and a fondness for annoying people, who take over a small town.

I'm not sure what Stanley Kramer had in mind in producing this picture, but if he wanted to show us a slice of contemporary Americana at its worst he has succeeded. Expertly photographed by Hal Mohr in stunning black and white, and vividly directed by Laslo Benedek who spared no details, "The Wild One" is tough and brutal—and particularly effective in portraying some of the town's citizens as of not too honorable character.

In the lead role, as the head of one of the two gangs that assemble in this town, Marlon Brando gives another rough, unpleasant characterization. At times his portrayal is brilliant, but unfortunately at other times, when the picture goes overboard in meaningless brutality, he seems like a caricature of all the tough roles he has played. "The Wild One" offers no clue to the cyclists' behavior; and the only key to the Brando characterization comes when the lynch mob is beating him up and he sneers: "My old man hit harder than that." The film ends without a conclusion. It is a vignette, a cross-section—powerful and frightening.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

IN THE SUMMER HOUSE

IN its strategies and intentions, and the kind of effect with which it is everywhere preoccupied, Jane Bowles' play suggests a dramatic appropriation of themes and techniques we have come, within the past decade, to identify with "the new fiction." "In the Summer House" displays the somewhat claustral focus, and the attention to symbolic structure and detail exploited by a whole school of contemporary novelists. Its characters move in that ambience of emotional isolation recorded by Carson McCullers, among others, so movingly. In her juxtaposition of Anglo-Saxon sophistication and the direct simplicity of the Latin temperament, and the relentless energy with which she portrays the impingement of reality on illusion, Mrs. Bowles reveals that she has shared in the experience which has shaped the fiction of her husband, Paul Bowles.

Each of these notes is sounded during "In the Summer House," yet out of so many echoes and fragments, Mrs. Bowles has fashioned a work of intricate and seductive beauty, harmonious and subtle in its impact on the sensibility as a musical composition. And like a piece of music, it is accessible to criticism largely in terms of its modulation and coloring, its sensuous texture and expressive content. Formally, the work is a little cloudy and undefined: when we do feel the schematic bones begin to push through the skin (chiefly in those moments involving a rather literal psychoanalytic symbolism), we suspect the director of having, for the sake of a tedious convention, turned the psychological screws. These occasions are, however, few, and for the most part Mrs. Bowles' fantasia evolves in a pure and untroubled aesthetic climate.

A fantasia I have said—but one anchored firmly in a world which is everywhere sharply felt and perceived.

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It is Mrs. Bowles' special distinction to have rendered as faithful a justice to the external reality of her characters as she has to their interior substance: she is not in collusion with their psychic discomfort: one never feels of "In the Summer House" that it is but another gratuitous portrait of the debilitated sensibility. Mrs. Bowles works from the actuality to the symbol, from the particular to the general—the process disastrously reversed last year by Mr. Williams in "Camino Real." She is as uninterested as any "new fictionist" in the coarse husks of experience, but she knows they have their own gross reality; and when they have been stripped away, and the life they obscured is released, the scene is not littered with psychological debris.

"In the Summer House" has, consequently, a shapeliness and human density, and a strong thrust of humor one rarely finds in the drama of fantasy. Two actresses of disparate styles have, moreover, brought the play to a supreme point of elegance and dramatic refinement. Disciplined by the subtlety of Mrs. Bowles' writing, Judith Anderson invokes memorably the harrowing dissolution of a woman who has lived all her life by denial; the obvious dimensions of the role are enriched by a vein of ironic reverberation to which the actress is always sensitive. Note, for instance, Miss Anderson's manipulation of the long *aria da capo* with which the plays opens—an unraveling of the knotted snarls in a life which proceeds almost wholly by modulation and inflection. It is faultlessly played. Mildred Dunnock gives a negative role soundless depth, chiefly by the accumulation of tentative gestures, sudden birdlike spasms, and impeccable transitions to a dry and fantastic humor. The portrait is oriental in its shaded delicacy, its angular precision and grace. Jose Quintero's direction holds the elements of the play in a guileful suspension, and some of his theatrical images—notably of a beach party at once somnolent with languor and tensely alive—are inextinguishably lovely. "In the Summer House" is possibly more dramatic poem than play, but it is astonishing to find how tenaciously it lingers in the imagination. (*At the Playhouse.*)

THE REMARKABLE MR. PENNYPACKER

MR. Burgess Meredith plays the above gentleman —a genial Victorian bigamist in knickerbockers, commuting the marital main line between Philadelphia and Wilmington—with stylish bravura and gusto. The period detail of Liam O'Brien's piece rings true. but not, I am sad to report, its central theme. Bigamy seems to me dramatically susceptible only to farce, as Alec Guinness, the Mediterranean species, lately proved: when Mr. O'Brien attempts to state it in terms of the human, moral world, he goes sentimental and deceitful. For the most part then, here is the Irish gift of the gab with very litle to gab about: altogether (as one angular lady announced at intermission, over her DuMaurier cigarette) "a Shavian play on an anti-Shavian theme," but shot through sharply with an irreparable sense of how rare and necessary was the Old Pretender's genius. (*At the Coronet.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

COMMUNICATIONS

"RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE"

New Haven, Conn.

TO the Editors: I was considerably interested in Father Victor White's article on "Religious Tolerance" which appeared in The Commonweal September 4, 1953. The English Dominican added his voice to that impressive chorus of thinkers and writers who find in complete religious toleration the ideal formula for modern society and the obvious corollary to the separatist notion of Church-State relations. May a fellow member of his religious fraternity disagree without incurring the stigma of unreasoning reaction? Since Father White's views are contained principally in his remarks on the "sacral" society and the "pluralist" society, I would like to turn for a moment to a brief examination of those two generic societal forms.

The "sacral" society is of course the "committed" society, the society with a central and unchallengeable creed, or myth, or ritual, or metaphysic. It presupposes certain fixed and supra-temporal values which not only rise above the social manifold but also exercise upon it from above an authoritative judgment, thus imposing order and hierarchy. The pluralist society, on the other hand, is one in which there is no central creed or metaphysic. Society is composed of many diverse and often irreconcilable elements which are united in a sort of flexible socio-political composition. There is no principle of judgment or discrimination save where some element becomes evidently and dangerously hostile to the other elements and to the very existence of the pluralist whole. There is no clear-cut final end of such a society and, of course, no supernatural end, because it is by definition a naturalistic society. Nature alone is common to all the elements thereof — natural need, natural aspiration, natural finalities.

Now it must be obvious that the discussion of the difference between a sacral society and a pluralist society raises all the issues which have been hotly disputed in the many arguments on Church-State relations and religious toleration. Father White in his endorsement of the pluralist society and his rejection of the sacral society allies himself unequivocally with the separatists — those who hold for separation of

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Church and State, non-recognition by the State of the Church and the supernatural order, and complete religious toleration. He explicitly admits his debt to M. Maritain and to Father Murray. This need not have been made explicit because it is evident that he makes the same presuppositions as they, speaks out of the same intellectual *milieu,* and relies upon the same sort of quasi-historical, quasi-rhetorical argumentation. In order to voice my dissent, therefore, I should prefer not to examine Father White's arguments in detail but, rather, to bring to light several pre-suppositions and typical practices of the separatist school which are found in his article and in almost every article which is a part of the separatist polemic. I do this for a good reason. I should like to push the argument one step further down and to examine the understructure which supports this interesting new development in Church-State speculation.

In my opinion the separatist polemic betrays the following tendencies and presuppositions:

1) *A revolt against the traditional teaching on Church-State relations.* There are no *ex cathedra* propositions on Church-State relations but there is a long theological and canonical tradition supporting the *per se . . . per accidens, thesis . . . hypothesis* explanations which are so vehemently discarded by the separatists. This tradition is either explicit or implicit in a vast number of documents emanating from the Papacy in the last one hundred years, especially in the writings of Leo XIII.

Now, this attitude of revolt against tradition would be quite unexceptionable a) if the traditional doctrine did not contain necessary and essential truths, or b) if the traditional doctrine were sterile and fruitless, unable to account for the relationship of the Church with modern "free" societies. Neither of these conditions can be verified in the traditional doctrine. The *thesis . . . hypothesis* position is both metaphysically sound and extremely flexible. On the one hand, it derives from an analysis of the nature and function of both Church and State, and from the unity and universality of the supernatural common good. *Thesis,* therefore, necessarily urges us to the conclusion that the formation of a sacral society is the inevitable inclination of Christian social thinking and Christian social planning. Yet, on the other hand, the traditional position, by means of the far-seeing use of *hypothesis,* is quite capable of guiding the Church in its activities within any conceivable societal form, even a *de facto* non-sacral form. It is, indeed, the traditional position which guides the Church today in her relations with modern society. What more could we ask of a doctrine or a plan of action than that it should not compromise with essential truths while at the same time representing a prudence which is genuinely responsive to actual historical conditions?

2) *An extreme personalism.* By this I do *not* mean that valid and necessary insistence upon human rights and the dignity of the human person which has been enunciated over and over again in papal and episcopal writings. I mean an "extreme" personalism in which a) objective truth must always bow to the vagaries of the invincibly erroneous conscience, b) the common good must invariably be set aside in favor of personal rights, or even personal interests, and c) any attempt to argue from the rights of truth and the common good is met with immediate hostility or suspicion.

This extreme personalism is especially evident in any argument that centers about the rights of conscience, or freedom of conscience. Now almost every important decision in political life and political speculation depends upon a delicate weighing and balancing of two elements—the common good and the rights of the individual conscience. Yet the separatist invariably introduces "freedom of conscience" as the unanswerable answer to everything. If the formation of a sacral society involves a serious problem of the dissident conscience, then for the separatist that is the end of the sacral society, whatever its other advantages may be. Moreover, there is a further assumption that if the resolution be made in favor of sacral commitments and the good of the many, this can be done only at the price of "forcing" individual consciences—which is simply not true. It is precisely the dissident conscience which is "tolerated." But the truth cannot be "tolerated." It can only be accepted.

3) *A hyper-juridical notion of the State.* It is the conviction of this reader that much of the separatist argumentation is founded upon a notion of the State which stems from a materialistic and totalitarian concept of the common good. The State is taken to be something less than human, an alien thing, a "third" thing—different from the people who compose it, and concerned only with the lesser elements of human existence. Once you have implicitly or explicitly defined the State as a sort of sub-human bureaucratic monster, it is a simple task to convince your disciples that a State with the gift of faith, or a State with the power to recognize the supernatural order, is an evident absurdity. But it is one thing to say that an eyeless *ens rationis* cannot recognize the supernatural order. It is quite another thing to say that a Christian people as organized in civil society for the attainment of full human good cannot recognize the supernatural order.

4) *An erroneous concept of the Church itself.* The Catholic Church is not a sect among sects. The Church is a supernatural, perfect, *public* society, just as the State is a natural, perfect, *public* society. The Church, therefore, cannot be considered as merely another isolated fragment in a heterogeneous pluralist *totum.* It is rather a unique universal society with unique *public*

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rights, especially in the domain of marriage, education and divine cult. These rights are divinely-given and the fact that certain types of human society, notably our own, are *de facto* incapable of acknowledging these rights, does not alter the nature of the Church nor mitigate her jurisdiction. But it does make a *per se . . . per accidens, thesis . . . hypothesis* solution of Church-State tensions both inevitable and extremely practical, combining, as it does, respect for truth with respect for the rights of conscience, a loyal adherence to dogma with a legitimate sensitivity to history.

5) *Violation of the basic law of argumentation in morals.* In moral matters it is the *end* which specifies. *Finis dat formam in moralibus.* In speculative matter —the object, objective truth; in moral matters—the end, the good, the perfection of the subject, i.e. his real perfection rather than the apparent perfection of the erroneous conscience. This means that every *per se* argument in morals must proceed from real proximate ends as they are subordinate to the real ultimate end. It is a commonplace of Catholic morals and Catholic sociology that every proximate end of man—family happiness, economic stability, education, entertainment, the political order itself—can and ought to be ordered either directly or indirectly to the supernatural end of man, the true common good of persons.

Yet Father White sees the death blow delivered to the idea of a sacral society once you accept the fact that the Gospel message is "an affair wholly of gracious election and individual decision." The acceptance of this undeniable fact no more rules out the validity of a sacral society than the existence of free will rules out the validity of any society! A sacral society is a human society, too, but it is founded not on the caprice of the resistant will but on the true inclination of the human will to its fullest realization in a supernatural final end.

6) *The predominance of the rhetorical mode of argumentation.* One of the chief characteristics of the separatist polemic is the Last Judgment. It is a species of guilt by association and the penalty is a cliché. Thus, the separatists and pluralists are "lively and sensitive thinkers," while the traditionalists are "conservatives" and "reactionaries." There are the "dynamic expositors" on the one hand and the "static expositors" on the other, and, of course, upon a show of hands who would want to be numbered among the "static expositors"? It is so easy to take advantage of the weakness and unconscious prejudice of the modern mind by calling attention to the fact that a certain position is "curial," or "Roman," or "medieval," or "Spanish." It is so easy to assume that one's own position is "progressive" or "dynamic." We sometimes forget that the unanalyzed slogans of liberalism are no less stupefying than the slogans of conservatism.

This constant use of the rhetorical mode of argumentation is manifest in every area of the separatist polemic. In the discussions on the "re-discovery" of the Two Sovereignties and the centrality of the human person it takes the form of a latter-day illuminism. In the discussion on the history of sacral societies it takes the form of dramatic caricature, as the separatist summons up the horrendous vision of the Inquisition, or suggests in scholarly asides degrading analogies between a Christian society and the conformist practices of societies built upon superstition, mythology or totalitarian fanaticism. And the total effect of this sort of argumentation is to leave the reader with the impression that no sensible or well-informed person could possibly defend the traditional position in this day and age!

This communication has been sent to the editors of The Commonweal with no other purpose than to combat this widespread impression. Each of the presuppositions mentioned above would require detailed and elaborate exposition, so that the treatment I have given them may very well seem cursory and unconvincing. Yet taken together in this way they may help to open up revealing discussions of a question which is as delicate as it is important. And it is my humble hope that it may be possible in time to communicate to others a truth which is so evident to many of us, namely, that the traditional doctrine on Church-State relations is not passé, not reactionary, but necessary and inevitable, and, what is even more surprising, remarkably fruitful for understanding and resolving the complex needs of our time.

(*Rev.*) DOMINIC ROVER, O. P.

Correction: *In "Catholics and Isolationism" [November 13, 1953], I described Senator McCarthy's voting record as "somewhat spotty" but "predominantly isolationist" and cited a few examples to illustrate the point. I now find I was in error on one of these examples; Senator McCarthy voted for rather than against aid to Greece and Turkey. I regret my mistake on this point. However, my description of the Senator's voting record as spotty but predominantly isolationist will stand, I think, as quite correct.*—JAMES O'GARA.

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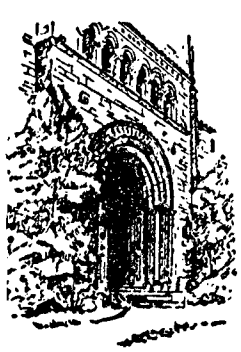

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OF NOTE

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

IN a talk delivered over the Vatican Radio in December, Father Gustave Weigel, S. J., of Woodstock College, discussed some aspects of the Pope's recent address to Italian Catholic Jurists. Father Weigel's talk was reprinted in the January 9th issue of *America* (329 W. 108 Street, New York City 25). Excerpts follow:

> For those who are engaged in the planning of the new society many obstacles present themselves. Religion, one of the strongest forces in the making of human history, seems a divisive element rather than a unifying cement. Islam divides Mohammedan from Hindu, Catholicism separates its adherents from Protestants, Judaism cuts off Israel from the Gentiles. Will not religion itself be the stumbling block to world union, even though at first gaze the notion of the fatherhood of one God and the brotherhood of all men should seem to be a unifying force?
>
> This disconcerting reflection need no longer terrify the pioneers in the work of juridically organizing the nations into one family. The message of Pope Pius XII to the national convention of the Italian Catholic Union of Jurists in Rome on December 6, 1953 shows the way out of the religious difficulty. In his carefully meditated study, the Pope outlines the juridical solution of the problem of religious disunion.
>
> The Holy Father makes it quite clear that the world union our age is contemplating cannot be built on the foundation of a common religion or in terms of one religious vision. The union can only be based on the one universal natural law which is achieved by human reason alone. The bearing of such a new juridical society to religion is clearly explained in accord with the perennial doctrine of Catholicism.
>
> According to the Pope, the position of the new juridical world order in the matter of religion will be friendly and cordial toleration. . . . The ecumenical society would protect and befriend religion and religious belief without taking on itself the office of becoming the arbiter of what that religion must be, for it is not the function of a purely natural organization to presume to such a role. It is God alone Who tells us what the true religion is, and He has done so supernaturally, using media which are above and beyond the powers of nature. And even God tolerates the existence of religions other than the one He Himself has structured, and prudent governments will do well to imitate their Creator.
>
> What is more, governments in a world society would have the obligation of practicing such tolerance. The State is not an Hegelian idolatrous absolute but only the working instrument for society's welfare. The peace of the citizenry and their prosperity in the secular order are the State's sole purpose. Peace means a condition of freedom compatible with public order and the exigencies of living together. Moreover, for the end of conjoint harmonious living in a concrete society conditioned by its own history and culture, it will be necessary for the state of that society to accept situations not of its own making but inherent in the evolution of the community it serves.
>
> At times such situations, from a theological point of view, are not ideal, but in vital practice the State is obliged to maintain them lest peace and its consequent freedoms be destroyed by the State, whose only purpose is to preserve them. In the new world union it cannot be the obligation of the State to deal with the theological question of religious truth. Its sole obligation will be to keep together in peace and harmony citizens who are free and responsible agents, who will one day meet their Maker to give a reckoning for their personal religious decisions.
>
> This lofty doctrine of Pope Pius XII, the highest authentic teacher of the Catholic Church, will be enthusiastically received by all men of good will. It certainly clarifies the obscurities lurking in the minds of so many of our non-Catholic brethren who feel that the Catholic Church is a conspiracy to rob them of their right to follow conscience in their religious decisions. It will encourage those who are striving for world union because they will know that the great spiritual force of Catholicism is propitious to their efforts. Above all, it will end the accusation of not a few who assert that the Catholic Church has a double norm for Church-State relationships.
>
> According to the accusation, the Church demands liberty for personal religious belief in countries where Catholics constitute a minority, while Catholic uniformity is imposed on all citizens in lands where Catholics form a political majority. The doctrine of the Pope is wholly different, for he speaks of a tolerant world-wide society formed by individual sovereign States, Catholic and non-Catholic, which will govern in their own communities in accord with the principles obtaining in the total world federation. This, according to the Pope, is in thorough harmony with the abiding doctrine of the Catholic Church. . . .

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The Creation of Literary Style

MIMESIS: The Presentation of Reality in Western Literature. By Erich Auerbach. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Princeton. $7.50.

By SERGE HUGHES

THIS is a virtually inconceivable book. The subtitle, "The Representation of Reality in Western Literature," rings with the Faustian overtones reminiscent of ambitious college essays. Its author, however, is a professor—a meticulous, erudite one, long accustomed to wedging each mosaic in its proper place. And the writing is not at all blurred by the common occupational disease of academic astigmatism. It is a constantly alert sequence of paragraphs, nervous and bold and frequently serenely impudent. For it does dishonor a good number of academically honored prescriptions. It does not care to define correctly its terms at the beginning of the discussion but allows the terms to define themselves in the elaboration of a very complex but always very clear context. It makes no attempt at formality, it extends no invitation to those who come after it to add another indispensable floor to the author's puny one hundred and seventy-two story structure. It even disarmingly informs the reader that in all likelihood the book would never have been written had the author always had at his disposal an abundance of original texts and learned monographs, and had he not been "stranded" somewhere in Turkey—Istanbul, I believe. The debt we thus owe to Turkey will not be easily paid.

The master plan of the work is to show how the mingling of everyday reality and tragic reality inevitably creates one style which can encompass all feelings, all spiritual attitudes from the meanest to the most exalted, and how, when it is felt that everyday reality can no longer be a worthy receptacle of the tragic element in life, different levels of styles are recurred to. At two important points in European history the levels of style were abandoned: once with the advent of Christianity, in which the classless and the dispossessed acquired a dignity and tragic stature which surpassed in depth and breadth what the classical world had been capable of; and again in the nineteenth century when the gradual struggle against the French seventeenth century's strict compartmentalization of the tragic and the commonplace had culminated in the works of Flaubert, Balzac, Stendhal. In both instances the return to a stylistic unity was a manifestation of a revolution in men's feelings and perspectives, and the change of style was one with a new spiritual orientation.

The common reader, like this reviewer, will probably not be able to pass judgment on the truth of this theory: one has to wait and live awhile with this book. What will be immediately obvious, however, will be the exquisite balance of the author as he goes from Dante to Rabelais to Montaigne to Shakespeare to Joyce, never reducing literature to a simple mirror either of the times or of society, nor making of literature the esoteric work of an esoteric mind understandable only through an esoteric experience. What will amaze the reader will be the caliber of the *explication-de-texte,* in which selected passages of an author are made to reveal layer upon layer of hitherto unsuspected meaning.

This is criticism in the finest modern European tradition, in the "linguistic" tradition of men such as Vossler, Spitzer, Croce, Castro, for whom Europe is a constant interrogation whose literature is ever to be questioned anew, insistently. Erich Auerbach has written in that tradition and fittingly, like most of his spiritual predecessors, in exile. It is a staggering act of love.

Idealism and Common Sense

AMBASSADOR'S REPORT. By Chester Bowles. Harper. $4.

By WILLIAM PFAFF

AS A young college graduate Chester Bowles wrote to friends that he was entering his father's business rather than the State Department, his first ambition, but that he would stay in business only until he was thirty-five. Then, "regardless of how far I had advanced, I would enter public service."

He advanced very far along the Cadillac-and-country club path of the successful businessman: by thirty-nine, he and William Benton operated one of the most eminent advertising agencies in New York. Then, four years tardy, he entered public service in the OPA. After service there, in the State Department and with the UN, he was offered an ambassadorship. He chose India. "Why in the world would you want to go to India? Why not some country in Europe?" Harry Truman asked him. This book is his reply.

The interesting and admirable qualities which sent Mr. Bowles from Madison Avenue to New Delhi made him famous (somewhat to his surprise) as an ambassador. He is made up of a high percentage of idealism, mixed with restless common sense and the instincts of the great public relations man. Arriving in India, he did, first, the sensible things which happened to be untraditional. He sent his children to a New Delhi public school rather than to a hill-station academy. He took a small home, and had the rambling ambassador's mansion cut up into apartments for the embassy staff. He air-conditioned offices and installed a commissary for the staff—and then shook them loose from the diplomatic social circuit for widespread travel through the country. He built up the circulation of American publications and held frank press conferences for the Indian papers. He set up a university lecture program, and seemingly for the first time got an American viewpoint to the intense student population.

Mr. Bowles has done a difficult

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thing successfully in this book, combining a remarkable amount of information with the personal account of his own and his family's reactions to India and Southeast Asia.

He describes in considerable detail, frankly and critically, the Indians' concept of their position in the cold war. A strongly anti-Communist Indian once asked him, "What would you Americans have said if Britain had demanded in 1939 that you must either support her in her struggle against Hitler or be classed as a nation of Nazi supporters?" Bowles' analysis of the Indian state of mind is profundly useful at the present time, when Indians are torn between the dogmatism of their neutralism and the shaking experience their representatives have undergone in Korea; when Americans are tempted to condemn the Indian position without understanding the reasoning and background of that position (something quite different from criticizing from understanding).

This is a very good book, thorough, factual, yet highly interesting to a general reader: an unassuming narrative of that personal discovery of Asia which inevitably rocks the wandering American. America, compared with most of the world, is as artifical an environment as an oxygen tent. The discovery of this fact is only partially communicable; it is too personal a thing. But Chester Bowles made that discovery, and tells of it thoughtfully and convincingly.

In The Tropics

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SYLVIA. By Edgar Mittelholzer. John Day. $4.

By EDWIN KENNEBECK

THE story of Sylvia Anne Russel, born around the end of 1920 and dead at the age of twenty-one, takes place in British Guiana, a locale about which Mr. Mittelholzer wrote sharply and strangely in *Shadows Move Among Them.* The country is mostly jungle, and has a population, smaller than that of Milwaukee, made up largely of people whose ancestry originated in India or Africa, with some Englishmen, Dutch, Chinese, Portuguese, and "others." There are many social levels, even within nationality and color groups. There are grave social problems.

This *milieu* is more interesting than the life and death of Sylvia; that is, in a sense, the point of Mr. Mittelholzer's novel. Named Sylvia by mistake—her father had asked that she be named Cynthia, after his mother—she is the daughter of a British engineer and an irascible mother who is half Negro and half Guiana Indian. They live in Georgetown, the capital, and Sylvia's life there is ill-starred from the beginning. Her mother, who is stupid and cruel, once burns her deliberately with a red-hot firewood coal. Her father is a forty-year-old rake with charm and kindliness and the decency to wait until Sylvia is about nine or ten before telling her something about the women he enjoys in the evening.

Sylvia grows up to be a good-looking, innocent, likable but spiritless girl. She develops a kind of Oedipus complex before her father is found murdered with one of his women, and then imagines herself to be in love with a young Portuguese. She consorts with some free-loving friends, and is propositioned several times but she remains chaste, mainly because the offers are not very attractive. For a while she is troubled by a desire for her brother David. Her Portuguese friend is not very good at love-making, and near the end of the novel Sylvia tells herself that she does not really love him. She dies after a long walk in the rain.

These and many other very interesting things happen to or around Sylvia, and it is too bad that Mr. Mittelholzer has used her as a center for his panorama. His views about British Guiana promise a good deal of interest, and his ability, used so deftly in *Shadows Move Among Them,* to catch the odd sound and look of that tropical country, is evident in this story. But his heroine, unable to find even a little happiness or to make it for herself, fails to serve as an adequate center for the tensions of the place, and his writing in this novel sometimes barely serves as a medium for conveying them.

The Life and Death of Sylvia is meant to be the pitiful story of a born victim. But mere victims are seldom interesting. Sylvia's tragedy would be more readable had she learned that, if she wasn't exactly the captain of her soul, she could at least make the boat rock a little.

The Divine Christ

JESUS OF NAZARETH. By Hilarian Felder. Translated by Berchmans Bittle. Bruce. $4.75.

By ROBERT PAUL MOHAN

THE late Bishop Felder, after concluding one of his lectures on the nature and mission of Christ at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, was approached by a well-known scientist who said: "We educated people hunger for Christ, and know so little about Him; give us another book which is written more from the positive angle, and which is not too expensive." This volume, destined for the mature Catholic, is a more than adequate answer to that request.

The original work referred to is the famous *Christ and the Critics,* a two-volume exposition of the divinity of Christ against the diverse attacks of modern skeptical criticism. The present volume, ably translated by Father Bittle, is a splendid contribution to apologetic literature on a theme already treated by such authors as Grandmaison, Arendzen, and Vonier.

Despite the facility with which the author discusses the personality, messiaship, interior life, divinity, and early historical evaluation of Jesus in Johannine and Pauline Christologies, one still feels that he is most effective in his abbreviated survey of rationalistic criticism.

We see artfully revealed in this section the rigid dogmatism of the undogmatic, and the illiberality of many of the supposed liberal critics of Christ. For these works, supposedly written in the aura of the calm objectivity of a new criticism,

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seem to have refuted each other much more effectively than they have refuted authentic Christianity.

Extremist positions, whether they view the story of Christ as the promulgation of intentional deceit, as suggested by Reimarus and Eisler, or as "unintentional poetizing," as charged by Strauss, seem to be of little contemporary relevance—although the Eisler theory has been rather ineptly revived by Rupert Furneaux quite recently.

Again, Baur and the "younger Tubingen school" may well be forgotten; but one suspects that the lyricized superficiality of Renan's "natural" approach is more in evidence in popular histories of early Christianity—at least in the United States—than the author may lead the reader to believe.

But the main hostile belief of our time, Bishop Felder maintains, is derived from the Ritschl-Harnack school of radical-liberal theology; it is the "form-critical school" of men like Dibelius, Bultmann, and O. Cullman, author of the famous *Christ and Time* and the recent study of Saint Peter. This school, he concedes, has manifested a commendable interest in early Christian sources; it has refuted many of the intemperate attacks of the earlier rationalists; it has to a great extent defended the authenticity of the New Testament. But it has contributed to a mentality which may eventually prove more inimical to the cause of a divine Christ than the overt attacks of the scoffers.

The modern critic of this persuasion clings tenaciously to the *a priori* conviction that supernatural intervention in the affairs of men is impossible. As a result of such utterly unhistorical presuppositions, even his most diligent research is inevitably colored to match the subtle hues of his own bias. His Christ is the aristocrat among men, a mystic enthusiast, the world's first democrat, a fighter for the dignity of man, a prophet of a new age—but He is not God.

This is indeed the attack of our time, and if the author had done no more than combat this subtle assault, he would have rendered a noble service.

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Franciscan Spirit

ASSISI AND UMBRIA REVISITED. By Edward Hutton. David McKay. $4.50.

By JOHN COURNOS

ONE needs to have visited Assisi in person to recognize the utter literalness of Mr. Hutton's assertion of its being a place whose "every corner seems to be filled with a peace no longer to be found elsewhere in the world." By this, of course, he does not mean the city proper, with its ancient Roman Temple of Minerva, for whose facade Goethe expressed an admiration fully as extravagant as he expressed his "aversion" for the real beauty of the other Assisi, the Assisi of Saint Francis. The famous German was too obsessed with classical form to be in a position to appreciate the more intangible but the no less real art forms created by what we may call the Christian spirit, and there is no hiding the fact that

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Goethe's failure to comprehend is a reflection on his reputation for possessing the wide culture commonly accredited to him.

The two churches, one above the other, on which Goethe expressed so inept a judgment, do represent the essence of Christian art in its greatest purity. Even a non-Catholic, even a non-Christian, must concede this. But then, as Goethe himself said, when a great man commits a mistake it is never a small one. The Lower Church, in particular, inspires an awe all the greater because it defies definition. One must be there to feel it, though Mr. Hutton does very well. As for the Upper Church, there are the unforgettable Giottos.

Quite properly the author gives a great deal of his attention to the landscape, with which the mood of the churches is at one. Nothing could be more impressively tranquil than the sight from Mount Subasio of the plain, so inexpressibly awe-inspiring in the twilight. "Nothing more lovely, nothing more serene and full of a Franciscan peace could well be imagined."

The other Umbrian towns—Spoleto, Orvieto, Perugia—come in for their share of observation and commentary; but Assisi is undoubtedly the crown of them all. This book, amply illustrated, is in some degree a revision and amplification of the author's earlier *Cities of Umbria,* which after several editions went out of print.

Optimistic View

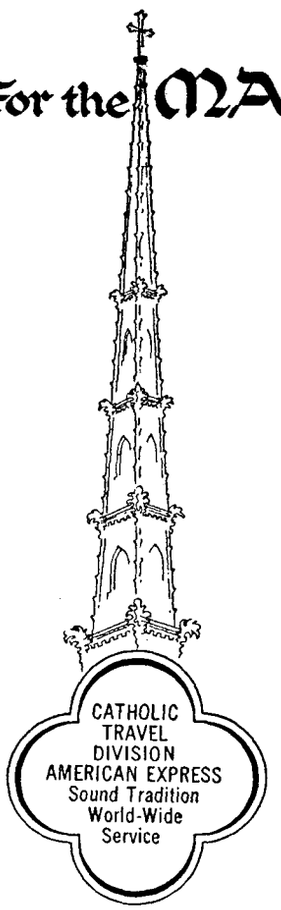
THE TEMPER OF WESTERN EUROPE. By Crane Brinton. Harvard. $2.50.

By M. A. FITZSIMONS.

THIS book presents Professor Brinton's antidote for what he regards as poisonous pessimism about Western Europe. This poison is purveyed by intellectuals, politicians and journalists, a whole company of voluble soothsayers turned doomsayers, who have reached beyond the second convolution, the crisis of the crisis. Their ring cycle of Western civilization is coming to an end with two plays on the stage at one time: the underplayed, genteelly gallant "Twilight of the British Empire" and the clever, politico-existentialist French comedy, "Four Republics Not Enough: Fifth, Anyone?"

Professor Brinton, drawing upon his observations of Europe in 1952-1953, protests. Western Europe, he argues, reveals no clear symptom of serious decline. The glib melancholy of the American pessimist, a William L. Shirer or a Katherine Anne Porter, serves only as a poison to weaken Europe's will and capacity for survival.

It is a wry, and unspectacular, and academic antidote. It draws upon earlier mistaken prophecies of doom. (But this evokes the unreassuring story of the boy who called "wolf" at the wrong time.) More impressively, the author notes the productivity of Europe, the persistence of its social patterns and its population growth. Above all, he obviously believes that man is endowed with an almost immeasurable toughness for survival and, I think, Professor



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30 Years/30,000

This week The Commonweal sets out for the major objective of its Thirtieth Anniversary Year: to increase its circulation to 30,000 by December 31, 1954. There are several favoring elements. We start from the encouraging basis of a print order this week of 22,000. Circulation has increased by more than fifty per cent within the last three years.

Before us extends an eleven-month campaign. During that interval The Commonweal seeks to add 8,000 new subscriptions. This will be relatively easy if present subscribers will attempt to interest new subscribers during the campaign.

The magazine itself will publish more good reading than ever during this anniversary year; a number of special publishing projects is currently under way. And there is the added inducement supplied by a new introductory subscription of 6 months for $3 to enable new readers to become well acquainted with The Commonweal. This special Thirtieth Anniversary Offer for New Subscribers is available for the first time this week.

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Brinton is bewitched by the continuity of history—to him, the past and the present irresistibly suggest tomorrow.

But the author really protests his poise too much. It is possible to explain the futilities of French politics but the explanation does not justify them or make France capable of meeting her problems. The pessimist will continue to confirm himself by observing the inadequacy of Europe's response to the difficulties facing her. Sometimes, as with the neutralists, Professor Brinton simply pretends that the problem does not exist. He fights shy of philosophies of history and, to follow his own vein of humor, is all rule of thumb. His shyness, however, may be well-calculated, for his own implied philosophy is a bleak enlightenment sustained by good breeding.

As an antidote, the volume performs a necessary function. But its proportions are wrong. It has the makings of an article and of a book. But in its present form it is too discursive and digressive, and the suspense (of judgment) might well be envied by Eric Ambler.

REVIEWERS

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